

Cruising Main

by Lou Jackson

The facade tells all who pass by that it is an old building. Ancient sand-tan paint curls on scroll work, friezes, entablatures, and semi-acanthus ornamentations of wood attached to the square front. It might be difficult to decide which portal opens except for the smoothe-worn brass handle that all must touch to enter. The front sags to the south and its center — about 15 feet up — seems to buckle inward. The building to its south, a peer but not a twin; seems to want to settle in the same depression. Both buildings are past their primes but hang on and Clyde's Billiard's still brings many visitors to the structures interior.

There, behind the bar, stands the owner. He serves beer by can, bottle, or glass to customers who have come to relax. Also available are cigarettes, jerky, boiled eggs, and sausages. Chewing tobacco and cigars are displayed on the counter behind the bar. There also sits a cash register, seemingly as old as the two Corinthian columns of oak posted at the extremities of the large silver mirror above it. Above each column hangs a rack of deer horns. As one sits at his choice of eight bar stools, he may see reflected in the mirror two deer heads mounted on the pink walls behind him. Or, he may glance down and through the glass doors into the refrigerated cases from which he may make his next drink selection. Soft drinks are also available.

Customers ask for change to play the Asteroid electronic game or the three pinball machines. A penny will tell your weight and fortune from a machine close to the front door. Your mood may be matched by melodies — classical and old favorites, rock and roll, country and western, or today's top tunes, from a Wurlitzer Hi-Fi Stereo that stands near the other machines of delight.

Cue sticks rest in their racks attached to walls, and other beer memorabilia dust and fade as they look down on players at green-felt covered card tables — one up front and two way back. Cribbage is played for free and a day of sluff for four may cost but one dollar. Old oaken chairs with low,



spindled backs await players. Perhaps an empty tap barrel rests nearby to hold a coat or hat.

Up front, the worn pine planks of the floor are ready for oakum, and nail heads, shiny and bright, stand above their less durable surroundings. On the wooden floor rests the largest of the three pool tables. It is massive, claims 35 years of experience, and gets leveled once a year when it is newly covered with its green felt.

On the cement floor to the rear of the room, rest two other Brunswick pool tables that are each 65 years old. The slate makes them heavy also. Counting markers hang above and with the several fluorescent lights, the players can see to pocket or to complain.

A new broom stands ready to sweep and keep floors free of debris, and ash trays are handy for smokers. Others leave their beers where they have been drinking and scurry off to the sounding machines and the tables where games are fun and challenging. Somehow they recognize their own cans and neglect them not. Some loose change has been glued to the counter, and younger fingers play with it as it entices. Talk is low and warm, and patrons know each other after hours of games and refreshing. There is an easy atmosphere and always room for one more.

Willis (Tink) Clyde stands behind the bar. It is said to be the oldest in Utah. It originated in Park City. But not Tink. He's a native of Heber City but has put seventeen years in as a miner at the Park Utah and Mayflower Mines. In the thirty years it has been daily work at the pool hall. His hours are now somewhat flexible. He opens at 8 a.m. and

closes at 5 p.m. — unless there are other demands. Sunday is his day of rest.

Family consists of his wife Lora nee Allison, of Center Creek origin, to whom he has been married for 56 years. They have four children, and only one lives away in Paramount, Calif. They have given the Clyde's 17 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren — and another on the way!

The pleasure of dealing with people enhances his work, but when asked about the uncashed check on the mirror, he claimed that he didn't even cash his own checks anymore. People always need to exchange their bills for his change, though, and that is about all the cashing he does. His pleasant personality and congeniality smoothes out trouble spots, and over indulgers are politely asked to leave the premises. Quiet games of pool at \$1 per hour per stick don't get too many customers into turmoils, and the oldest building on Main Street remains quiet.

Winter, when people want off the street and company, is his best season. And, if one reminisced and recalled all the names of people who had stepped in for a moment, the list of famous, infamous, and not so famous might be very long. Tink mentioned Billy Martin of baseball fame as one who had graced the premise.

Mr. Clyde's thirty years on Main Street has seen his children grow and travel other avenues to make their livelihood. Children and grandchildren have other interests, so he will remain until he gives it all up. Perhaps his 17 years as a Scoutmaster has given him talents to deal with boys and men. His no smoking or drinking has probably qualified him to be one of the best kind of bar men in the business, and working casually with people who are resting may have taken the anxiety out of his daily labor. Al and Jim Murdock who built and ran the bar for the first seventeen years before the Clyde's took it over, might well wonder with the rest of us — "Who will run it next?"

ished trails when possible? Groomed trails are free of fences, guy wires, thin ice, overhanging tree limbs, and other hazards.

Here's a list of places to avoid: ski slopes, precarious drifts, thin ice, steep sidehills, avalanche areas, and land posted as 'private property' (unless you have permission). Avoid unnecessary jumping, passing on narrow trails, and intentional spins on ice. Never cut across another snowmobiler's path.

When traveling with a group, use hand signals to let the person behind you know your intentions. If you want to turn right, point to

the right several times. Point to the left for a left turn. Hold your hand straight up, arm bent at the elbow, for a stop. Stay a safe distance behind the sled in front of you in case the driver has to stop suddenly.

Finally, dress right to keep warm. Wear multiple layers of clothing to trap air inside for good insulation. Clothing should be specifically designed for snowmobiling. Always wear a safety helmet. Avoid scarves and loose belts that may be snagged by tree limbs or moving parts. Protect your face and eyes with a helmet-shield, or with goggles.

Heed these safety suggestions and you'll help prevent injury to yourself and others. Ignore them and you run the risk of causing a serious accident. Make the sport of snowmobiling fun for everyone by being safetywise and cautious.

(Our thanks to John Deere Limited for the information on safe use of snowmobiles. For a free copy of a snowmobile safety booklet, write to John Deere Limited, Sales Promotion Department, P.O. Box 1000, Grimsby, Ontario, Canada L3M4H5.)

